

From: Freedom of Information

Sent: 11 August 2020 15:34

To:

Subject: Freedom of Information Response (Our Ref: K/20/268)

Dear

Freedom of Information Response (Our Ref: K/20/268)

Thank you for your Freedom of Information (FOI) request dated 17 July 2020, reference K/20/268.

Your request read:

“1. How many students requested mitigating circumstances for “racial trauma” during the years 2016-2020?

Please could you provide a breakdown of information by:

- a. Year
- b. Ethnicity
- c. Gender

For clarification: by ‘requested mitigating circumstances for racial trauma’, I refer to a student completing the university’s relevant mitigating circumstances document/online form/requirements and including the specific phrase “racial trauma” either from an option the university has provided or in their own description of why they are eligible for mitigating circumstances.

2. How many students requested mitigating circumstances and included the name “George Floyd” specifically in their submission between 25 May 2020 to the date upon which you action this request?

Please could you provide a breakdown of information by:

- d. Year
- e. Ethnicity
- f. Gender

Please also see the clarification for question 1, but consider “George Floyd” instead of “racial trauma”.

3. How many students requested mitigating circumstances for “anti-semitism” during the years 2016-2020?

Please could you provide a breakdown of information by:

- g. Year
- h. Religion
- i. Ethnicity
- j. Gender

Please also see the clarification for question 1, but consider “anti-semitism” instead of “racial trauma”.

4. How many students requested mitigating circumstances including any of the following words or phrases during the years 2016-2020: “racism”, “racial hatred” or “racial discrimination”?

Please could you provide a breakdown of information by:

- k. Year
- l. Ethnicity
- m. Gender

Please also see the clarification for question 1, but consider “racism”, “racial hatred” or “racial discrimination” instead of “racial trauma”. You need not provide a breakdown by word or phrase for this question.”

The University of Leeds holds information relevant to your request. However, we consider that to respond to your request as it is currently framed would exceed the cost limit as set out in Section 12(1) of the FOI Act. Section 12(1) states that a public authority can refuse a request if complying with it would exceed the appropriate limit of £450. For the purposes of FOI, time spent on the permitted activities is calculated at the flat rate of £25 per person, per hour. The appropriate limit therefore represents the estimated cost of one person spending 18 hours to determine whether the information is held, and to locate, retrieve and extract the information.

The University does not hold a central repository of all extenuating/mitigating circumstances forms submitted. These are held at an individual school level. There are 33 individual schools at the University of Leeds. In order to identify cases where particular phrases were used, each individual form would need to be reviewed in turn. Mitigating circumstances forms can be completed by hand and as such this review would need to be conducted manually. In order to complete this work within the appropriate limit of 18 hours, each school would need to review all mitigating circumstances requests received in the previous five academic years in less than 33 minutes (33 schools each taking 33 minutes gives a total of 1089 minutes/18.15 hours). The University of Leeds receives thousands of mitigating circumstances requests each year, and as such this review would take far in excess of 18 hours.

If you were to refine your request, limiting your enquiry to a specific school and over a shorter timeframe, we may be able to provide some information. Should you wish to submit a refined request, you can do so by emailing foi@leeds.ac.uk.

We hope this information is helpful. If you are unhappy with the service you have received in relation to your request and wish to make a complaint or request a review of our decision, you can request an Internal Review. Requests for Internal Review should be made in writing using the following contact information:

Post: Mr D Wardle
Deputy Secretary
The University of Leeds
Leeds
LS2 9JT

Email: foi@leeds.ac.uk

Requests for Internal Review should be submitted within 40 working days of receiving the University’s response to your request. Further information about how the University manages Freedom of Information requests and about our complaints procedure is also available on our website (www.leeds.ac.uk).

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. Generally, the ICO cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted the review/complaints procedure provided by the University. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF.

Kind regards

Chloe Wilkins

Freedom of Information Officer

Secretariat

University of Leeds